R E P O R T R E S U M E S

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SEARCHING AND SALVAGING TALENT AMONG SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED POPULATIONS.

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BECAUSE NEGROES COMPRISE LESS THAN 1 PERCENT OF THE INTERRACIAL COLLEGE POPULATION, EDUCATORS MUST TRY TO IDENTIFY THE MANY CAPABLE DISADVANTAGED NEGRO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AND ENCOURAGE THEM TO ATTEND INTEGRATED COLLEGES. THE NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP SERVICE AND FUND FOR NEGRO STUDENTS (NSSFNS), IN A SHORT-TERM APPROACH TO THIS PROBLEM, ADVISES HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS ABOUT ADMISSION AND SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES IN INTEGRATED COLLEGES. WITHIN A 14-YEAR PERIOD, NSSFNS HAS HELPED 8500 STUDENTS ENROLL IN 350 ACCREDITED 4-YEAR COLLEGES, WITH OVER $3,700,000 IN SCHOLARSHIPS. DESPITE RELATIVELY LOW NATIONAL APTITUDE AND ACHIEVEMENT TEST SCORES, THESE STUDENTS HAD SUCCESSFUL COLLEGE CAREERS, AND ACHIEVED CONSISTENTLY BEYOND THE LEVEL PREDICTED FOR THEM. THE LONG-TERM APPROACH INITIATED BY NSSFNS ENCOURAGES SCHOOL PERSONNEL TO IDENTIFY AND MOTIVATE TALENTED DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS EARLIER THAN THE 12TH GRADE. IN THIS CONNECTION, THE NEW YORK CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION SUCCESSFULLY ESTABLISHED A 6-YEAR DEMONSTRATION GUIDANCE PROJECT IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL 43 AND GEORGE WASHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL. MORE STUDENTS IN THE PROJECT ENROLLED IN COLLEGE THAN NON-PROJECT STUDENTS FROM THE SAME SCHOOL, AND MOST OF THE EARLY PROJECT GRADUATES CONTINUED THEIR EDUCATION BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL IN SOME FORM. OTHER PROJECTS HAVE GROWN OUT OF THE ORIGINAL DEMONSTRATION PROJECT, BUT THEIR EFFECTIVENESS DEPENDS ON THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS, THE SCHOOL'S INITIAL SUCCESS IN IDENTIFYING THE ABLE STUDENT, AND ON INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP GUIDANCE TO CHANGE BOTH THE STUDENT'S NEGATIVE SELF-IMAGE AND THE PARENT'S ATTITUDES. (LB)

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TO MEET THE NEEDS IN SECONDARY EDUCATION
DR. GOLDIE RUTH KABACK, CHAIRMAN
THE CITY COLLEGE
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Welcome to the afternoon session on meeting the needs in secondary education for guidance of disadvantaged youngsters. I always feel that the chairman of a panel is a kind of academic Simon Legree who holds to the time alloted for each paper so that the audience may also have ample time to participate. Therefore, I have taken the prerogative of limiting each paper to about 25 minutes and then Dr. Gordon Klopf, our discussant, will summarize. There will then be ample time for questions from the floor. When you raise your questions will you please identify yourself and then indicate to whom your question is addressed.

Now, I have the privilege of introducing Mr. Richard Plaut, whom I have known over the years, and who is President of the National Scholarship Service and Fund for Negro Students.

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MR. RICHARD PLAUT

NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP SERVICE & FUND FOR NEGRO STUDENTS

I have been asked to talk about talent searching and salvaging. Talent searching and salvaging are means of closing the educational gap and equalizing educational opportunities. These are probably the most important tasks facing American education today. These tasks must be attempted on two levels. The first level involves those who because of ability, motivation, and a little help at the right time, survive against the severe obstacles they face and manage to get to their senior year in high school prepared for college. This is the top 10%. The other 90% are those who fail somewhere along the educational line because they couldn't overcome the overwhelming odds. Many of them, too, are salvagable if they get the extra help they need early enough in their school lives. This topic of necessity

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involves some incidental discussion of an organization that is trying to do something on both levels in different ways.

The National Scholarship Service and Fund for Negro Students which here and after will be referred to as NSSFNS, was established in 1948 with the rather simple goal of increasing opportunities for Negroes for higher education in interracial colleges. It came into being to remedy a failure in the social structure. This particular failure, the founders felt, was that Negroes, who constitute 10% of our population, were less than 1% of our interracial college population. Before the establishment of NSSFNS a study showed that attitudes (at least in northern colleges) overwhelmingly favored more qualified Negro students. The study clearly showed that however great a factor bias might be in other educational or geographical areas, bias was not keeping Negroes out of northern colleges. In addition, the founders of NSSFNS had the notion that opportunity is only equal when it is offered to all persons without distinction at the same time, in the same place, and on the same terms. Opportunity offered in segregation, whether in the North or the South, is never equal opportunity. Quite aside from the moral inequity, segregation in education is always a failure. Schools and colleges held apart from the nation's cultural confluence fall inevitably into a downward spiral of educational regression. This was the rationale for the phrase "in interracial colleges" which completes the statement of the primary purpose of NSSFNS. The first treatment to remedy this social failure was simple, direct, and symptomatic. We established a college advisory service, to reach as many high school seniors as possible and to tell them individually about specific opportunities for admission and financial aid in colleges which met their qualifications, needs and aspirations. There is strong evidence of the partial success of this treatment in the 8500 students who in 14 years have been helped to enroll in some 350 fully accredited four-year interracial colleges with over $3,700,000 in scholarship awards. That this effort was also at least partially unsuccessful is also clear because places for five times as many might have been

found had that number been qualified and available. Most of these students have been the beneficiaries of "reverse discrimination" by the colleges in which they enrolled. The reasons were, partly, because they were Negroes and, more importantly, because their less than competitive credentials were viewed by the colleges as due to cultural lacks and poor quality of preparation. It is important to demonstrate that this reverse bias has paid off in a startling way. The college work of these students has consistently exceeded the prognosis over a period of fifteen years. For example, a study of five classes which has been going on for over two years and is now nearing completion, will show that 91% of the respondents received their bachelor's degree, the 9% drop-out rate for such a culturally and economically disadvantaged group glistens against the background of a national drop-out rate of more than 40%. A more detailed examination of 4 other classes enrolled in college in 1961-62 shows the following characteristics of 504 respondents. Tabulations of the academic progress of these former NSSFNS counselees and scholarship holders show that 8% of them had a scholastic average of A or A-; 57% B+, B, or B-; 33% C+, C or C-; 2% D or below. About 1.2% of them withdrew from college for academic reasons; 2.3% for other reasons. Of these young people close to 73% received financial assistance ranging in value from $50 to $3200. 60% of them earned from $40 to $1400 a year. The annual cost to their college years ranged from $250 to $3300. Their families contributed from $0 to $2100. Almost 70% of these students are taking liberal arts courses. The balance are in pre-professional courses such as law, medicine, engineering, nursing, medical technology, physical and occupational therapy, architecture, business, education and dentistry. More than half of the 1962 graduates will enter graduate or professional schools. Many former counselees hold major or minor public offices. Some are members and occasionally officers of predominantly

white fraternities or sororities. Outstanding achievements among these students include 3 Woodrow Wilson fellowship holders, 6 graduate assistantships, 1 Phi Beta Kappa, 1 straight A graduate (the first in the history of his college), 1 class salutatorian and student council president, 2 magna cum laude degrees, 4 cum laude degrees, 1 class marshall, 1 highest ranking senior and recipient of the American Chemical Society award, 1 German Government award for study at the University of Berlin, 8 Dean's list students, 10 major class or student body officers, 2 varsity captains, etc. On the other side of the ledger, it should be noted that the students entrance credentials included average scores of 467 verbal and 462 math for those who took the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying test. These scores are converted into the College Board scale as you can see. The average verbal and mathematical scores of those who took the preliminary . scholastic aptitude test were 46 and 45 respectively. All of these average scores are well under the national average of college scholarship holders.

These students, however, are only the survivors, the top 10% of their age groups. What of the other 90% that fall, and are still falling along the way. Thus far, we have only concerned ourselves with the short term approach to increasing the quantity and quality of Negro enrollment in college. Not only is this a short term approach, but it is also a superficial one for we are reaching the student when he is already a college candidate in the 12th grade. A great deal has been learned during the course of the NSSFNS program. We have learned that the educational lag has no racial basis. It happened because of cultural and economic deprivation, operating equally among all ethnic and racial groups. Nevertheless, there is a considerable overlap between deprived groups and minority groups, especially Negroes. The trend toward two-class cities, the rich and the poor, with the middle-class moving to

the suburbs, has brought about expanding slums with heavy concentrations of Negroes, Puerto Ricans, and other minorities. The children of these residents of run down neighborhoods are largely attending schools in which too little is expected of them and achieved by them. Of equal if not greater importance, we have learned that attacking the problem at the 12th grade level only scratches the surface. It helps only the relatively few survivors, those with enough native ability and drive for education to overcome the effects of early deprivation. These two concepts seem relatively simple and even obvious now. If any one proclaimed them back in 1955 that proclamation eluded us. Yet they go to the very core of the problem and lead us to the long term approach in depth: much earlier identification and educational stimulation of able but deprived children.

The first opportunity to test these conclusions in New York City came in 1955 with the appointment of the Board of Education's Commission on Integration. This body was created to cope with de facto segregated schools and the inequality of educational opportunity offered in them. One of the Commission's recommendations proposed a demonstration guidance project, in a junior and senior high school, for the early identification and educational stimulation of students from deprived families. The measure of the success of this project was defined as the increase in college enrollment from project classes over pre-project classes from the same school. The first demonstration project, now renowned at least among educators, began in Manhattan's Junior High School 43 and in George Washington High School in the Fall of 1956, co-sponsored by the New York City Board of Education, the College Entrance Examination Board and NSSFNS. The project goals were: 1. to identify potentially able students early enough for them to realize their full educational potential;

2. to change their own as well as their parents' images of themselves as permanent strugglers for survival to one in which going to college was not only possible but likely; 3. to teach them sufficient competence in the basic academic skills so that they might ultimately qualify for college admission as well as for financial aid.

In evaluating the results of the project today it should be borne in mind that these goals were set for a school population approximately 45% Negro, 40% Puerto Rican, 15% "others" with a common denominator of extreme poverty. Of the last pre-project class of about 200 going on from Junior High School 43 to George Washington High School about 5 went on to higher education. The drop-out rate was high; there were serious disciplinary problems. These are a few highlights after the six years of the project: 1) The average project student reading was 1.4 years below grade level at the beginning of the project. In 2.6 project years his reading jumped from a level of 5.4 to 9.7. For the first time in the history of the school project students read well above grade level. 2) The first, second, and third project classes were graduated from high school June 1960, June 1961 and June 1962 respectively. From these three classes over 150 students were graduated. Today most of them are enrolled in some form of post-high school training. Many of them are in four-year colleges. Without the project it is a fair estimate that no more than thirty would have even finished high school. The drop-out rate has been halved and serious disciplinary problems have virtually disappeared.

How were these results brought about? First, by the expenditure of money. Substantial sums had been invested in the project divided between the two schools. With an earlier start in elementary school, with more schools

involved and invaluable experience applied, the job can be done for much less -- but it will always cost money. Secondly, by people. The money is spent largely for more professionals of high quality. The principal and his guidance and teaching staff must be not only of outstanding professional competence but must also have a deep conviction, amounting to dedication, that their goals are obtainable. Thirdly, by identification. Here we started with a familiar dilemma. On the one hand, we must try to predict academic potential among culturally disadvantaged children with instruments loaded with the culture of which they have been deprived. Or on the other hand, we must try to use instruments devoid of that culture -- i.e., adopt an approach which is equally self-defeating. In the absence of a single magic instrument, a ten-factor profile was developed including verbal and non-verbal tests, classroom performance and teacher judgment. In a return full circle to the pre-testing era, teacher judgment proved to be the most useful tool. Fourth, by changing the self-image. Individual and group guidance are needed almost to the saturation point. This is proven by continuous discussion of higher level careers; cultural exposure in the form of trips to the theatre, the opera, concerts, museums, industrial plants, college campuses; giving status to outside reading; involving parents on these social economic levels to an almost unheard of degree. After a while, all these activities caused these children to think about colleges to the same extent as any group of middle class children. Fifth, by emphasizing academic skills. Remedial teachers, smaller classes, enriched programs and intensive guidance all contributed to the general rise in achievement and aspiration.

The key word to these five project aspects is totality, totality of attack. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Fragmentary attacks, any one or two aspects do no harm, but they don't do much good either. To use

a physical analogy, the child just doesn't need his arm put in a sling. He needs total diagnosis and total therapy.

Before the half way mark was reached in the original six-year project, and within a few months after John Theobald became New York City's Superintendent of Schools, he launched and has since implemented plans to extend the project's P.S. 43 principle to 80 other New York schools. This program, called Higher Horizons, starts on the elementary school level and includes non-college bound children as well. The goal is to lift the achievement of all disadvantaged children. This year the program has gone into 15 additional high schools, thus reaching 80 schools in all. Meanwhile NSSFNS has undertaken the task of spreading the "P.S. 43 concept" to other communities through its subsidiary activity, Community Talent Search. Through arrangements for exchanges of visits, advice, stimulation and technical assistance, CTS has helped bring about similar projects in Washington, Philadelphia, Morristown (New Jersey), Hartford (Connecticut) and sixteen other cities in New York State. Several other states, cities, and towns have activities in the planning or preliminary stages; still others have been otherwise activated.

A very few years ago a cloud considerably smaller than a man's hand could have covered the area of awareness that there was an educational gap. By early 1963 the mushrooming of public interest, the growth in educational programs, and the increased attention in the press to the problem of educational lag has been evidenced by the following series of events: New York City's 80 school Higher Horizons program, New York State's 16 city Project Able, 4 States (California, Maine, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island) on the verge of State-wide action, projects in 15 to 20 other cities and the Ford Foundation's School Community Improvement Project in 8 or 10 other cities,

The National Education Association's School Drop-out Project, the specially oriented teacher training programs such as Project Beacon here at the Graduate School of Education, Project Bridges at Queens College, NDEA Training Institutes at Teachers College, NYU, network TV coverage on NBC and network radio coverage on CBS, articles in magazines with circulation totalling over thirty-five million, and so forth.

Although we may well feel encouraged there are no grounds for complacency, the surface has only been gently tickled. Perhaps 250,000 culturally and economically disadvantaged elementary and secondary school children are presently benefiting from special services. The difference between this number and the 8 to 10 million disadvantaged children in our elementary and secondary schools is the measure how far we have yet to go. You may be interested in some of the problems inherent in launching such activities and in their cost. Over the years, we have learned that there are very few absolutes of universal application. There are these two, however. First we have learned that this particular cat can be skinned in a great many ways, at a wide range in cost. What is right for New York City is not necessarily best for California and New England. Projects should be custom tailored to fit the needs of individual communities after a careful study of those needs. Secondly, the attack should be total and not fragmentary. There must be some hedging about costs. Costs are largely determined by the starting phase. That is to say, the present class size, the present student counsellor ratio, the present incidence of auxiliary services. In most cases about $60 per year additional cost per pupil may be assumed an average starting phase.

I should now like to turn to the question of "how do we finish the job." The final obstacle blocking the most potentially able of these young

people from going on from special projects to college is: lack of money. This is the justification for a Federal scholarship program as well as for state scholarship programs and privately sponsored programs supported by foundations, industry, fraternal and social organizations. The needs of the increasing number of able young people who already are knocking at the doors of the colleges just cannot be provided for from existing sources of financial aid. The ability to pay can no longer be a critical factor in determining who shall go to college. We have already reached the stage where it is no longer a critical factor for most candidates of superior developed ability. There is almost enough financial aid, in one form or another, for those of them who really need it and know where to look for it. There should be equal provision for the promising student whose achievement at grade 12 has been only average or a little better, provided that the deficiency is a result of cultural and economic handicaps. Furthermore, better communications must be developed to tell these students that financial aid is available and where to look for it. The almost nine thousand young people helped during the 14 years of NSSFNS activity to enroll in a four year accredited degree granting institution, constitute abundant evidence of how much can be accomplished for the little encouragement, enough information and some financial aid at the right time. There is now awareness of these needs in both educational and governmental circles. There has been a start toward the mobilization of public opinion. There are limited funds available from the federal government, largely NDEA, from some state governments, from foundations. The big break-through to the ultimate solution that appeared to be so close a year ago, however, fell flat with the death of the Administration school and college aid bills in the House of Representatives. These bills, as originally introduced, would have provided a Federal

Scholarship Program under the Aid to Higher Education Bill, as well as a ten percent earmarking of school aid funds for experimentation with the special educational problems of schools in run-down areas of large cities. Other similar bills seem equally unlikely to meet with more success in the present session of the Congress.

The most promising step towards the ultimate solution, however, still appears to be in the proposal for a National Talent Foundation established along the lines of the National Science Foundation. The task of a National Talent Foundation can be expressed in the following terms: 1. To increase opportunities for integrated higher education for students from all disadvantaged groups; 2. To award financial aid to promising students from deprived backgrounds who have been admitted by colleges but who cannot compete successfully in the normal national and college scholarship competitions; 3. To help communities and school systems understand the need for and to acquire the resources, techniques, attitudes and funds necessary to identify early, to stimulate, and to offer the extra services needed to equalize educational opportunity for all of their young people. All of these things have been done on a limited pilot basis. It has been demonstrated that they can be done, that doing them pays off to the individual and to the nation. It is now time that they were done on a grand scale, more suitable to the numbers of young people involved and their importance to themselves and to the nation.